



Community Action Research Track (CART)

Department of Family and Community Medicine
Community Health

UT Southwestern
Medical Center

MISSION

The Community Action Research Track (CART) offers medical students opportunities to promote healthier behaviors, address key health issues within communities, and engage in service-learning activities with the underserved.

Students participate in community-based service learning experiences and didactic sessions designed to improve their skills in community medicine. Through these experiences, they contribute to improving health in the underserved communities where they train.

“ Doctors have a community attached to each patient they treat. ”

– JULIA DOBERVICH, Medical Student, CART

DESCRIPTION

Community Health in the Department of Family and Community Medicine sponsors CART for medical students at UT Southwestern.

CART is based on the principles of community-based participatory research (CBPR) and population medicine, with special emphasis on health promotion / disease prevention and the social determinants of health. Students enrolled in CART participate in a coordinated program of instruction, electives, and service-learning experiences. CART offers medical students a long-term experience in community medicine and research with cumulative tracking and evaluation of research data.

The CART Program consists of CORE experiences including:

- Workshops and seminars on Social Determinants of Health, Community-Based Participatory Research, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Cultural Competence, and Health Literacy
- Pre-Clinical Electives with topics focused on working with underserved populations, eliminating health disparities, public and global health
- Community Medicine Elective
- Participation in community service-learning experience

Students who complete CART requirements receive a Certificate of Knowledge in Community Medicine. After completing CART, students are knowledgeable in CBPR techniques and have significant skills in applied community medicine.

“ The Community Action Research Track (CART) is an innovative program that links the medical school to the community. CART prepares future physicians to be aware of social, psychological, economic and cultural determinants of health by participating in comprehensive service-learning experiences. ”

– NORA GIMPEL, M. D., Program Director

REQUIREMENTS

To enroll in CART, students must

- Be a Pre-Clerkship or Clerkship student
- Submit an application

To earn a Certificate of Knowledge in Community Medicine, students must:

- Attend CART DISCOVERY meeting
- Attend core concepts workshops and seminars
- Participate in yearly service-learning community projects
- Complete at least one pre-clinical elective by the end of their 2nd year
- Complete a community medicine elective during either the 3rd or 4th year of training
- Complete a small community-based project by end of 4th year
- Complete at least four online trainings pertaining to health literacy, community medicine, public health, health promotion and disease prevention

TEACHING RESEARCH METHODS WHILE REACHING THE UNDERSERVED

CART responds directly to the need for integrating CBPR, population medicine, health promotion / disease prevention and the social determinants of health into the medical school curriculum. CART students and community members benefit equally from the program's array of service-learning opportunities and research projects.

Through the CART program, students participate in various activities, including but not limited to:

- Volunteering in a free or reduced-fee clinic
- Helping to establish new clinics
- Providing screening or counseling to participants at local health fairs
- Working with community partners to increase immunizations
- Volunteering in local walking and nutrition programs
- Volunteering with hospice and other home-visitation programs
- Contributing to community-based maternal, child health and parenting programs

COMMUNITY HEALTH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM (CHFP)

A subset of CART, students participate in the competitive Community Health Fellowship Program during the summer between their first and second year of medical school. Community health fellows complete a nine-week program consisting of didactic training workshops and sessions, community medicine fieldwork and data collection, and oral presentation and manuscript preparation.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Nora Gimpel, M.D., Associate Professor
Chief, Community Health
214.648.0766
Nora.gimpel@utsouthwestern.edu

Cathy Day, Program Coordinator
Community Health
214.648.7096
Cathy.day@utsouthwestern.edu

